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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'The Mad Arms Race Continues'

It is true, as The Post's May 31 editorial ["Half a Percentage Point's Difference"] states, that most members of Congress "concede that now and for some years to come a larger share for defense is going to be necessary."

It is also true that a minority in Congress strongly disagrees with this view. We vote against it. We speak against it. We have the facts to prove it wrong. Unfortunately, as in the first six years of the Vietnam War, we do not have enough votes against it.

The American people are told by their political leaders, and the CIA and most newspapers, that the Russians are outspending us in military arms and that unless we dramatically accelerate our expenditures we are in peril of Red extermination. The Russian people are told the same about American military escalation and aggressive intentions.

Thus the mad arms race continues.

There are responsible experts, including some in the CIA, who say the Russians are outspending us. Other responsible experts say the opposite, but their views do not get public attention because of the momentum of the conservative-corporate power surge that is sweeping the country.

An example is the rather well-kept secret that in 1978 NATO spent \$180 billion while the Warsaw Pact spent \$160 billion. When U.S. forces are added to those of NATO, the West has more men under arms than those of the East. Yet the West is outnumbered 3 to 1 in tanks, aircraft, etc. This military inferiority in conventional capability suggests better planning, not more expenditures. The West seems to know how to devise programs to spend money, but not programs to redress the balance.

In strategic weapons each superpower has nuclear arsenals capable of destroying the other many times. Those in America demanding more billions for the military do not point out that while the Soviets have some 6,000 deliverable warheads, we have 9,200.

The case for increasing U.S. spending to play "catch up" against the Russians has not been made. A case can be made for a wiser use of the huge sums in the United States more than \$1 trillion over the next five years.

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